
From: Kimberly Kelly <kimberly.kelly2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2013 9:53 AM
To: AppropriationTestimony
Subject: DEEP Durational forestry positions

To the Chairman and members of the Appropriations Committee,

The following is a letter that we strongly support as it is a reasonable request for sustainable positions that have little to no effect on the budget. It is unfortunate that the DEEP has not taken the immediate action of supporting these position requests.

Thank you

Mr and Mrs. Peter G Kelly Jr
255 Cemetery Rd
Canterbury, CT 06331

Dear Committe members,

We write to request that you intercede in the decision made by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) to allow 3 durational forestry positions to lapse at the end of March. Over the past two years, these positions have been paid for from the proceeds of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. It is important to note that two of these positions generate more revenue for the state than they cost, and the third is essential to help municipalities do a better job in managing roadside trees to improve tree health and save money by reducing storm-related damages. It is somewhat embarrassing to have to ask for your involvement with just 3 staff positions, but because resources are so tight and retirements/attrition continues, we believe this is critical.

We ask you to encourage DEEP to reconsider this decision and provide the funding to enable these durational forestry positions to become permanent. Following are some facts about the durational foresters who are so critical to manage state lands:

- Full-time DEEP Foresters who manage state lands generate an average of \$90,000 annually apiece for the Connecticut General Fund from growing and harvesting forest products. This means they typically earn the state more than they cost.
- In less than two years, the durational foresters have produced 10,000 acres worth of forest management plans and generated forest product sales projected to earn some \$240,000 in income for the state. At the same time, these activities produce significant jobs and economic activity for Connecticut's private sector industry while enhancing the habitat and other ecological benefits these forests produce.
- These foresters are slated to be laid off in April 2013. If their jobs are not retained, two years of investment in their training and experience will be lost, along with some \$2,000,000 in projected general fund revenue over the next 10 years.
- Years of retirements and staff attrition have left the DEEP Forestry Division without a single forester to manage over 41,000 State Forest acres in eastern Connecticut, and 25,000 State Forest acres in western Connecticut. The management plans for most of these forests have expired, some several years ago.
- This lack of staffing means public requests cannot be serviced, and tens of thousands of dollars in forest products sale revenues are lost annually. Over 600 miles of State Forest boundaries are not regularly monitored. Recreation value is lost, invasive species problems increase, insect and disease infestations go undiscovered and unchecked, and firewood sales for homeowners cannot be offered.

- Investing in these positions now will earn the state of Connecticut money, benefit the state and people environmentally, and re-establish ourselves as responsible stewards of the peoples' land.

Proper management of our state forests is not only good for the environment, but it is the fiscally responsible thing for the state to do as the landowner.

Thank you for your consideration of this request!

The following organizations have endorsed this letter and would enjoy the opportunity to speaking with you about it:

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc.

Connecticut Tree Farm Committee

Eastern Connecticut Forest Landowners Association

Friends of Goodwin State Forest

Norcross Wildlife Foundation

Society of American Foresters, Connecticut Chapter

The Last Green Valley

Windham County Conservation Commissioners